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Friday, August 29, 1941

SUBJECT: "IF YOU'RE BUYING JUNIOR A NEW SUIT." Information from home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Here we are around to the clothes question again.-- No, not women's stockings this time.

No, it's not clothes for the feminine side of the house now. It's a new suit for Schoolboy Jim, I have pointers on today--very timely, helpful pointers, just released by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The textile specialists in the home economics laboratories in Washington have studied boys' suits, inside and out. They've literally taken them apart and gone over every detail of material and workmanship to find what makes one suit look well and wear well, while another goes to pieces in a few weeks of the rough-and-tumble action a lively boy gives his clothes.

One thing stands out. Price is not always a guide to quality in a boy's suit. That's particularly true this fall. The upswing in the cost of materials and labor is making it hard for some manufacturers to hold to established price lines. In a situation like that, the tendency of course is to cut the corners on quality.

So here are 3 ways to be sure you're getting the most wear value for whatever amount of money you want to spend for Junior's suit.

By the way, a boy who's growing very fast may be able to get only one winter's wear from a suit. So you may not want to buy the best grade wool material.

All the same, Point No. 1 is to check the quality of every bit of the cloth. That means not only the suiting itself, but the linings, and as far as you can the interlinings, and padding, and stays.



Point No. 2, and it helps you to find the answers to some of the "hidden" qualities in Point No. 1, is read all labels.

This year you'll find new labels on all clothing that contains wool. They're the result of the Wool Products Labeling Act--a Federal law that went into effect this summer. If the label reads "100 per cent wool" or "all wool," it means the suit cloth is made of all new wool. If the wool has been used before and then reprocessed to make the cloth, then the label has to say that clearly.

Some people are asking, does the fact that wool is new make it superior? The answer of course is "no." There are good and not-so-good new wools--in other words, many qualities of new wool.

So besides reading the label, look closely at the cloth. Notice the weave to see that it's firm. See how much "give" it has both ways--and whether it has "spring" when you crush it. Poor quality cloth feels harsh, and lifeless, and scratchy.

Cotton corduroys, by the way, are as good as ever for boys' suits--and much less expensive than good quality wool, of course.

Now for Point 3, just a word or two about fit. It goes without saying almost that a boy wants his suit to fit comfortably. No boy looks well or feels good in a suit that's too large or too small for him. To get the proper size, have him try the suit on, and see how it feels and looks as he moves around. It is impossible to go by the size indicated on the label, because sizes of boys' suits are not yet standardized.

But it isn't necessary to buy a suit many times too large for a boy just to make sure he has room to grow in. Choose a suit styled along sports lines, with fullness cut into it. Such features as the bi-swing back, pleated trouser fronts, elastic waistband, and let-outs in seams and cuffs allow for considerable growth,



And necessary to any boys' happiness are good pockets--plenty of them. For an all-purpose suit, duplex type pockets in the coat are best. These are pockets in which the flap may be worn inside or out. When a boy puts things in these pockets they don't get boggy the way patch pockets do. The edge of a pocket--the "mouth" of the pocket as the tailors call it--needs to be well taped too, to hold its shape.

Pockets are only a detail however. The experts in selecting boys' clothes say the coat is really a key to the quality of the whole suit. Unless the coat is well made and of good materials inside and out, there is no need of looking further at the trousers.

For one thing, be sure the coat is cut correctly with the weave of the cloth. The lengthwise thread of the material should fall in a straight line down from the shoulder. In the sleeve, the warp thread should fall straight downward from the highest point of the armhole.

Padding in the shoulders of good coats will be only slight. But what little there is will be sewed in securely. Then it can't slip out of place.

Best quality coats are usually only partly lined with a fine, close-woven rayon. Stitching around the armhole is neat and usually done by hand. Any exposed seams the lining does not cover are neatly bound.

Well, this is by no means the whole story on buying boys' suits. But it gives you an idea of what the home economists have put into the new bulletin on boys' suits just printed by the Department of Agriculture. If you're interested, write to Washington and ask for a copy. It's free. The title again--Buying Boys' Suits--U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.



